

grace notes

The August Newsletter of Grace Lutheran Church

Summer Still Going Strong at Grace!

Grace's Summer Worship Comes to a Close with Hard Questions

Summer...it's a time we always want to last for a long, long, and even longer time. Yet as we now come into August and the final weeks before school, there's just a little more time to relax, slow down and enjoy the great outdoors.

By the time you get this Grace Notes, we will have already started our last summer worship series entitled: *The Hard Questions: Questions from the Congregation*. Back in May we handed out feedback cards for you to submit various questions and ideas for a sermon. We gathered them and whittled them many suggestions down into the ones most frequently

requested. We hope you will enjoy answers and thoughts about these hard questions



As part of our summer worship experience, we offer a Sunday morning **Children's Worship** Bible Time during sermons as a way to help our children connect with God on their own level. This month we are asking the question, **"Where is God?"** We learned that we find God in our family, friends, creation, and everyday life. We will continue our quest as we explore "where is God" in our fears, sickness, and our joy! Read more each week on our Children's Ministry facebook page for updates on a specific Sunday!

HARD QUESTIONS WORSHIP SERIES

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| August 15/16 | God...why do you allow suffering? |
| August 22/223 | God...what should I do with my disappointment with you? |
| August 29/30 | God...does prayer really make a difference? |
| September 5/6 | God...what's the big deal about church? |

Please join us as you are able! If you can't make it, please take time to connect with us on our website. (Each week the sermon is available to download and listen! In addition we will continue to offer daily devotions for you to journey with us, no matter where your summer takes you!

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Grace Plants a Vineyard

Growing Our Ministry to the Community



What are all those sticks doing on the land next to the Andover Community Gardens?" Here's the simple answer to that frequently asked question...

Each individual stick will support a grapevine recently planted in the vineyard on land owned by Grace Lutheran Church.

This five acre vineyard will be managed by Twin Rivers Winery from Ramsey, MN. Owner Mark Hedin (a member of Grace) has agreed to donate 10% of all proceeds to local community needs, and the surrounding neighborhood will have a voice in where these funds will be distributed in the years ahead. When the vineyard begins to produce grapes, Grace will contact the nearby neighbors to vote to determine which community agency, ministry or activity will receive the fund. None of the proceeds of the vineyard will be contributed to our budget.

Our successful partnership with the City of Andover with the Andover Community Gardens will continue on this parcel of land as well.

Why plant a vineyard? Why host a community garden. It is our desire is to be good stewards of this land and to seek ways to make a difference in our community.

Celebrating the gifts of Grace

Pastor Mark's Remarks

I may be a bit prejudice, but I think we have some **amazingly generous people at Grace. That's right! We have people who willing give and give their time and energy to do all kinds of things, and am constantly amazed at the results!**

For instance, I am thinking of those who bake, prepare, serve meals for families devastated by the loss of a loved one. I don't think most Grace members realize the incredible ministry the women and men (mostly Graceful Seniors) who work so hard to welcome families and friends after a funeral and serve a meal...that is, not until you yourself experience the loss of a dear family member. It's then you understand that a Funeral Reception Team is a visible embrace of grace from the Lord a time when you need it the most.

At Grace we have such a team headed up by Jan Quick and Jan Galvin. As soon as they learn about a funeral they start calling and planning for people to bake bars, prepare sandwiches, coleslaw, and veggies, and decorate the Fellowship Hall. Often times, the team prays for the family as they work in the kitchen and they always try to reach out with comfort and grace to those they serve. I sometimes I sit back and watch them. I am just amazed at the ways in which they give! And I'm told over and over again by the families who



much the funeral reception team has touched them.

Another way I have been amazed is how generosity comes in the simplest ways...even in the form of a paint brush! Yes...I talking about the recent group of people who volunteered hours and hours to paint rooms in SONday School rooms and Day Care areas in preparation for new carpeting. Headed up by Alden Riley and his helper and wife Judy, the following people gave a lot to Grace through a paint brush: Dick Thompson, Larry Hirsch,, Becky Gerlach, Sue Melody, John Peterson, Johnnie Tillery, Bruce Denney, and Tom Ryan.

It was a bit challenging to get all the painting done. They had to first wait until Vacation Bible School was over in order to sand, fill holes, remove coat racks and floor molding. Secondly they had to paint around the Day Care schedule so as to keep the paint fumes to a minimal. All of this meant our volunteers had to come to paint in the afternoons, evenings and weekends in order to get

it all done. What a big job! And what a big gift of generosity!

So won't you join me in celebrating the gifts God has given us through each other. It is wonderful to experience the generous ways of Grace!, isn't it!

Filled with deep gratitude!

Pastor Mark

Deepening Your Spiritual Roots This Summer



There is one more month of summer left, and we want to soak up every bit of it that we can, right? While you are **soaking up the summer sun**, I'd like to **plant some ideas** in your mind. Our theme for the year is **CULTIVATE: Making Room for God's Promise** (Pastor Mark will tell us more about that), and the emphasis is spiritual formation. **The big question we'll be asking all year is: What steps can we take in our lives to make room for the Spirit of God to work in and through us this year?**

There are two keys ways that I hope to **CULTIVATE** our spiritual formation at Grace this year: **SPACES** and **PATHWAYS**. First, we need to cultivate new spaces where people can connect with each other for mutual encouragement, prayer, **fellowship, and growth**. I'm **thinking** especially about our **emerging adults** (the **20s-early 30s crowd**) and our **men's ministry**.

Second, we need to create new pathways to help people understand how to grow deeper in **faith**. **God's love is free and faith is a gift, but it isn't easy to grow in it**. Where do we turn to find the help we need to deepen in our relationship with God, each other, ourselves, and the world?

There is not an easy, three-step answer to these questions. However, I am excited about a new resource that is taking root on our website. I encourage you to go to graceandover.org and under the resource menu, find the page called **How to Grow in Your Faith**. **The text below is what you'll find there**. I encourage you to visit the page and take the first steps. Let me know how it goes.

Step One: Take the Spiritual Habits Assessment (SHA)

The SHA is a 35-question survey that helps you evaluate the spiritual habits that you might focus on in the upcoming months.

- print the paper version -or- Take the SHA online

Learn more about the Seven Habits of Spiritual Formation.

Step Two: Explore the different opportunities to connect, grow, and serve
If you are in the early stages of your faith journey...

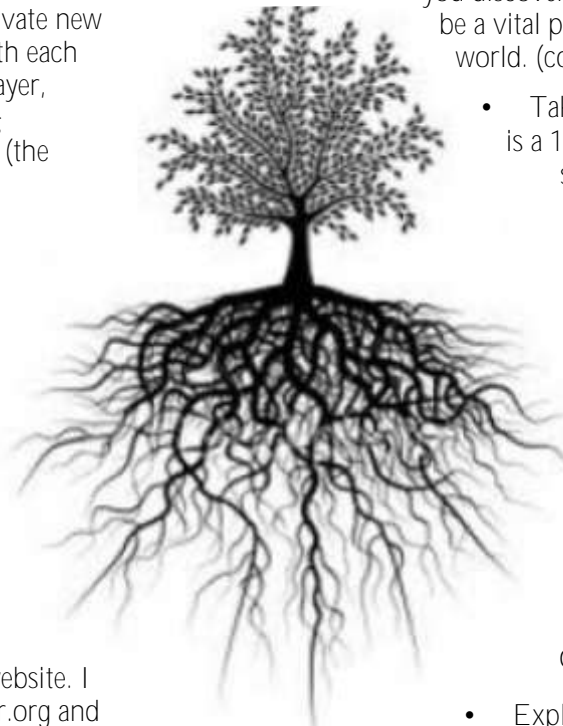
- The Journey: An 8-month spiritual journey designed for seekers and/or new believers to get a solid grounding in the Christian practices. (coming soon...)
- Attend the next S.H.A.P.E. class. This course will help you discover how God has uniquely gifted you to be a vital part of what God is doing in and for the world. (coming soon...)
- Take the Bible Mania Course online. This is a 12-lesson course that will give you a solid introduction and overview of the Bible.

If you are new to the church and want to get connected...

- Sign up for the next Connect Class. This is a one-time opportunity to share a meal with other newcomers to Grace, hear the stories of Grace, and find out how to get connected.

If you are a growing Christian and want to dig a little deeper...

- Explore the various Adult Ministries and Serving Opportunities at grace.
- Join the next Session of Sunday Evenings @ Grace. This is an opportunity to choose from a smorgasbord of adult education opportunities.



Blessings

Pastor Steve

God's Work. Our Hands.

Grace joins thousands of churches across the nation for a day of serving!

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor.

Our church will be one of nearly 10,000 ELCA congregations participating in “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday on Sept. 13. Across the country, thousands of ELCA members will engage in service work to make a positive change in their communities, to build and deepen relationships and to share God’s love. Our service activities offer an opportunity for us to explore one of our most basic convictions as Lutherans: that all of life in Jesus Christ – every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life – flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God’s grace.

So let’s put our faith - and God’s grace - into action on “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday, Sept. 13. We’ll meet at Grace at 3 pm for details and directions, then go out to serve in our neighborhood, then return to church for a light supper, ending at 6 pm.

What projects will we do?

- Plant shrubs in local parks
- Pick up trash along Bunker Lake Blvd
- Visit shut-ins from our congregation
- Make sandwiches for the homeless in Minneapolis



What should we bring?

- Bug spray & sun screen
- Your family & friends
- Your ‘grace-filled’ hearts & hands!

All ages of volunteers are welcome to join the teamwork and enjoy the fellowship on “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday, Sept. 13, from 3 – 6 pm. For more information, please contact Jeannie Hellmann, jeannieh@graceandover.org

Have you thought about trying something new?

Grace has many opportunities to worship and serve God on Saturday nights and on Sunday Mornings during worship. We have opportunities behind the scenes like Altar Guild, projection and sound. We also invite people to serve in a more visible way...like greeting or ushering. We usually ask you to serve once a month.

I thought it would be helpful when praying and thinking about if you should take a new spiritual step to serve, to know a bit more about each ministry area. And I want to reassure you...you will be working with or trained by people who have done this before.

Altar Guild - Set up for communion. Afterwards wash the wine and juice glasses for use. We are in need of several people/couples/families to help with Altar Guild.

Communion Team - Offer Bread or Wine to those coming up for communion.

Greeter – Welcome those who come to Grace as well as thank them for coming after the service.

Prayer Reader – Read the prayer of the church during worship. It will be typed out and given to you to read.

Projection – Run the Worship PowerPoint presentations.

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Getting Ready for a Great Youth Ministry Year

A Word From Kristi

Plans are made! Dates are set! Mentors and leaders are getting enlisted and equipped. It's going to be a great year in Grace's Youth Ministry. Take a glimpse of all we have planned.

Catechism (6-8th Grade Students)

This year we will focus **The Apostles Creed and The Lord's Prayer in Luther's Small Catechism**. We'll have tons of fun doing it, too! The registration form due date is Catechism is Sept. 1, 2015!

Important Dates:

- Wednesday, September 6rd, 6:30 pm: 6th Grade Orientation for students and parents.
- Monday, September 14th 7:00 pm: Catechism Small Group Leader Training
- Wednesday, September 16th, 6:30: Catechism Kick-Off Event for all students!

Own Your Faith (9th Grade Students)

OYF is the year of discernment when high school freshmen connect with an adult mentor to spend one more year investigating their own faith and preparing for Confirmation in May.



Important OYF dates:

- Tuesday, September 22th, 7:00pm: OYF Mentor Training (Mentors only)
- Friday – Sunday, September 22-25: OYF Kick-Off Retreat. This retreat ends with a parent/student blessing ceremony in the 10:30 worship service.

High School Ministry (9th – 12th grade Students)

The Dojo is our weekly meeting place for high school students to connect, grow, be equipped, and to serve.



Important High School dates:

- Sunday, September 20th, 3:00pm-5:00pm: Upperclassmen (10th – 12th grade) Dojo Reunion. **Let's regroup and form new tribes** for the year.
- Sunday, September 20th, 5:00: Leadership Summit for all SALT members!
- Saturday, September 23th, 10am – 6pm: The AMAZING RACE. Check the website for details and permission slips!

It has a little bit of everything: Games, the Amazing Race, a hotel stay, food, friends and lots more! It's just the beginning of a GREAT time with our high school ministry at Grace! So check out the details and make sure you turn in your registration form by Rally Day, Sunday, September 13th. It's best **NOT** to miss out on any of this, but if you can only attend part of the weekend then please talk to Kristi and we will make it happen. **WE WANT YOU** to be there!

Get up-to-date info every week at www.graceandoveryouth.com

Please contact Kristi Larson with questions. KristiL@graceandover.org

Serving Opportunities con't. from previous page

Scripture Readers – Read the scripture during the service.

Sound Booth – Operate the sound board through the worship service.

Usher Teams – Welcome those who come to Grace as well as direct them to the Worship Center and for communion stations. Usher teams allow you to connect

with several people because you work as a team. We are currently looking for ushers for all services.

I look forward to hearing from you and helping to find an area where you would like to serve.

Kate

katem@graceandover.org

A New Kid on the Vision Board...

A Word from Deb Stang

Have you ever been “the new kid?” Do you remember your first day at school or summer camp? You didn’t know where the bathrooms are...you didn’t know how to work the sinks...you didn’t know where you are supposed to put your “stuff”...you didn’t even know most of the people who are there. That’s the feeling I had when I joined the Vision Board in June.

(Before going any further, I do want to thank the congregation for electing me to the next three years of the Vision Board. I plan on giving 100% to help fulfill God’s plans for our church.)

I have been to two meetings so far, and boy oh boy, I have come to two conclusions: 1. I really don’t know much, but I’m really willing to learn! 2. The Vision Board has to work really hard to keep in touch with the heartbeat of the church. There’s a lot going on!

Here are some things I have already learned:

- *Grace’s hopes and plans for outreach into and far from our community are huge!
- *Grace’s Nightingale site has grapes growing on it, with 10% of the proceeds going to local community needs.
- *Sunday Night S’mores is free and being offered as a way to build and grow our neighborhood connections and friendships.
- *There is a difference in meaning between the words “mission” and “missional.”
- *Grace Lutheran is helping in Haiti by giving financial support for abandoned children. Right now there are 8 kids being cared for by a Haitian woman in a very small room. Can we, at Grace, make that even better?
- *Watch for the word “Cultivate” in the future. It’s going to be exciting!
- *More new carpeting is coming to Grace!
- *Sunday School rooms are being painted. I absolutely love the grey color that was chosen!

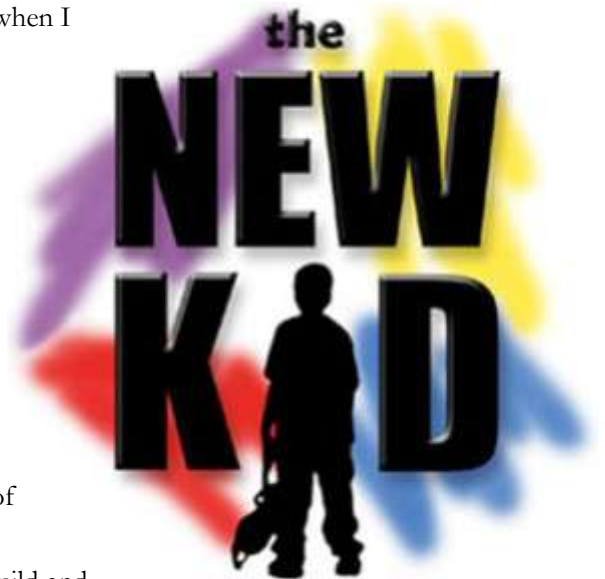
Back to being “the new kid.” I realize I will have these feelings for a while yet, but at least I have learned a few things already. I do feel like I fit in and I now know where the bathrooms are! Life is good!

Feeling grateful and blessed,

Deb Stang

Vision Board Member

To Grace Lutheran
 A huge THANK YOU for the 66 cases of water donated during Vacation Bible School and the month of June! Your kindness is truly a gift and such a blessing for the youth in our community who are experiencing homelessness! Many thanks!
 HOPE 4 YOUTH in Anoka



Vision Board Members

Tari Yates (President)

Greg Ackerson (Vice President)

Jessie Crooks (Secretary)

Doug Hanson

Bernard McDowell

Deb Stang

BreAnn Haugrud

Pastor Mark Hellmann

If you would like to contact any of the Vision Board members, please visit the Grace website and click on Leaders.



Blessing of the Backpacks and Angel Pins

As we prepare for the start of school, we will encourage each and everyone of our student to know God is going **with them!** How? We're going to bless Backpacks and give our Kindergartners an angel pin. When? At all the services on August 29/30!

We invite our Kindergartners to come up for the **Children's Sermon with their dads and moms.** Together we will talk about the ways in which God will help them get on the bus, find their teachers, and make new friends. We will tell the kids to look at their angel pins and remember that God is with them!

We will also invite K-12 students to bring their backpacks with them to Worship and bring them up to the altar for a special blessing. It will be a great way for us to ask God to help them study and learn.

Rockin' Kids Bible Club – Begins Wednesday, September 16

Join us this year, as we become Agents in Action, as we learn how God's Word can help us live out "secret missions" in our every day life, facing the challenge of learning to live as God's Disciple! Registration forms at available at the Welcome Center and on-line.

Would you like to be a Mission Leader? RKBC is looking for enthusiastic youth and adults to be Small Group Leaders, who are part of RKBC each week, and our monthly, Malt Night Chefs, Agent Games Leaders, and Bible Discovery Leaders. Please contact Monica Allen if this mission is for you! monicaa@graceandover.org.



Baptism is an important step in the life of a family. A Baptism Workshop will be offered for parents who would like to have their child baptized here at Grace. The Workshop will be held on Saturday, September 12, at 9 a.m. During the workshop, you will have an opportunity to explore what Baptism means for you and your child, as your family takes this step in your faith journey. We will share with you, insights on raising a child who knows and loves God. Please contact Monica Allen at monicaa@graceandover.org or the church office to sign up for the workshop.



SONday School – Begins on Rally Day, September 13

Please join us for all the fun on Rally Day, come meet your teachers and begin your Bible story journey as we learn about **God's amazing love and how very, very, much he loves you!** Registration Forms are available at the Welcome Center and on-line.



SONday needs many helping hands, would you like to help?

- We need teachers, especially at 10:30. Our curriculum is designed to make it easy for you. All the materials you need to teach your lesson are provided.
- Do you like teaching, but don't want to make a big commitment? Please consider being a Substitute Teacher. Substitute Teachers are great blessing to our teaching staff and we would like big list for our teachers!
- Youth Helpers are a blessing to the teachers of our younger children. If you had fun helping at VBS, please consider being a Youth Helper.
- Fun Food Team – This team helps make our wacky snacks for SONday School. We only do snacks once a month.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."
Matthew 19:14

SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE during August . . . to support children in our local community!



Simple Steps:
1. You shop for School Supplies – please purchase pencils, pens, crayons, markers, paper,

notebooks AND backpacks!

2. Bring your donations to church during August – let's fill up the Welcome Center in lobby
3. Your donations will BLESS students at Sand Creek Elementary School and Hope 4 Youth

YOU and your generosity will help kids SUCCEED . . . right here in our local neighborhoods. These school supplies will be given to students in need through two of our outreach ministries - Hope 4 Youth in Anoka and our Faith & Community Partnership with Sand Creek Elementary School.

THANKS for sharing God's grace in such simple & tangible ways (paper & pencils) as we continue to be... *'a ministry of grace in the heart of Andover ... and beyond.'*

Vision Board Notes

The Grace Lutheran Church Vision Board met on July 15th, 2015 at the home Deb Stang. Members present were: Greg Ackerson (facilitating the meeting), Jessie Crooks, Mark Hellmann, Doug Hanson, BreAnn Haugrud, and Deb Stang. The group enjoyed a delicious meal and had good conversation regarding the ongoing projects in Haiti.

After dinner, Pastor Mark led a Bible study on the Parable of the Soils. (Mark 4:1-20). This was a way for the board to consider next year's study of the Gospel of Mark.

The first item of business was the election of the new Vice President of the Board. Greg Ackerson was unanimously elected as the 2015-2016 Vice President. Jessie Crooks will continue on as Secretary. Tari Yates is the current Vision Board President.

The board planned out the hosting of the Fellowship Time on July 19th between services.

The rest of the meeting focused upon:

- A discussion about the difference between Missional and Mission and how we as a church can be more missional.
- The forming of a Ministry Team to help oversee and develop our involvement with the Haiti Home for Abandoned Children
- The forming of a Missions Team to further grow and direct future Mission Trips as well as explore long-term sustainable support in Williamston, Haiti.

Pastor Mark introduced next year's ministry theme: "Cultivate...making room for God's Promises.

The meeting closed with a time of prayer

Respectfully,

Jessie Crooks



Opportunities for Fall

We invite women of all ages to join us for one (or more) of the following women's opportunities at Grace . . . a place to connect with others, a space to be real, a time to be encouraged, and a chance to grow in faith and friendships!

Bible Studies at Grace All women are welcome!

- Monday Night Group

This women's group meets from 7 – 8:30 pm Monday nights at Grace, beginning Sept. 14. Experience the encouragement of women while learning more about Biblical truths for everyday living.

Contact: Joan Hackleman 763-753-4191 jhackleman1@yahoo.com

- Ruth Circle

This group meets the second Wednesday each month at 1 pm at Grace. Join this gathering of ordinary women to learn more about our 'extra-ordinary' God.

Contact: Jan Galvin 763-421-0668 cricket2005@usfamily.net

- W.O.W. (Women on Wednesdays)

W.O.W. will meet from 9:30 - 11:15am each Wednesday, beginning Sept. 16, with childcare provided for a small fee. A variety of studies are offered, as the laughter, learning and 'wow' moments continue.

Contact: Jeannie Hellmann 763-421-6520 jeannieh@graceandover.org

Special Women's Events Reserve these dates & invite your friends!

- Mugs, Muffins & More Sat. Oct. 3 9:30 – 11:30 am

Spend a relaxing Saturday morning connecting with other women of Grace, sharing life & love & laughter! You bring a mug - and we'll brew the coffee & bake the muffins! Yes, there will be a spiritual nugget of encouragement too!

- Women's Fall Retreat** Sat. Nov. 7 9 am – 4 pm

Connect (and re-connect) with others, yourself and God! Enjoy a whole day away on Sat. Nov. 7 to refresh & recharge your life, as the women of Grace grow in faith & friendships. The retreat will be held at Bunker Hills Activity Center.

- Women of Faith Conference Oct. 16 & 17

This is a Christian gathering for women of all ages in St. Paul (Friday evening and all day on Saturday). The music will move you and the teachings will transform you. Learn more at www.womenoffaith.com

- Hearts at Home Conference for Moms Nov. 13 & 14

You'll find your 'mom' spirit affirmed and revitalized through this conference filled with music, skits and speakers who understand the real challenges of motherhood. Read more at www.hearts-at-home.org For more information about these opportunities, please contact Jeannie Hellmann, Director of Women's Ministries, 763-421-6520, ext 122 jeannieh@graceandover.org

WOW is the Word for Women at Grace

W.O.W. Begins September 16



Women of all ages are invited to W.O.W. (Women on Wednesday). This bible study and fellowship group will help each of us

women learn from - and lean on - **God's word**. We will remind one another of **God's abundant grace** - and amazing love - as we listen, pray, encourage and support each other through our everyday lives. And

together may our response to God - and to life - be a resounding, joy-filled **"WOW!"**

W.O.W. will begin on Wednesday, Sept. 16 from 9:30 to 11:15 am in Fellowship Hall, and we'll meet each Wednesday throughout the school year. Save the date and invite your friends! And if you have the need, childcare will be available for a small fee. For more information, please contact Jeannie Hellmann, jeannieh@graceandover.org

The SUMMER into FALL "Challenge"



TRULY - YOU will make a difference in this world by packing meals for children who are literally starving! Come and join the teamwork (and FUN) with other Grace volunteers at Feed My Starving Children, as together we share God's grace in this very tangible way . . . through food!

Mark your calendars and sign up to serve!

Wednesday	Aug. 12	6 - 7:30 pm
Saturday	Sept. 26	2-4 pm and 7-9 pm
Friday	Oct. 9	6-7:30 pm
Friday	Nov. 20	6-7:30 pm and 8-9:30 pm

SPECIAL NOTE: A fast-paced COMPETITIVE Packing Event will be held on Fri. Sept. 25 from 8 - 9:30 pm. If you're interested in joining this lightning-speed packing extravaganza please contact Jeannie Hellmann.

1. REGISTER on line www.fmssc.org
2. Click "Volunteer Registration"
3. Click "Pack at Permanent site"
4. Click "Join a Group"
5. Under group name, type "Grace Lutheran" ... and under Location type "Coon Rapids, MN"
6. Choose the shift/date that you'd like to volunteer, then click "join"
7. Click "confirm"
8. Then you will be prompted to set up an account the first time you register, after that it will be easy for you to reserve or change your volunteer spots on line.
9. You can also call the church office to register: (763) 421-6520

FMSC warehouse is located at 401 S. 93rd Ave NW, Coon Rapids. Please arrive 10 minutes before your shift begins and please wear close-toed shoes.

Grace Lutheran Church

13655 Round Lake Blvd NW, Andover, MN 55304

A Ministry of Grace in the heart of Andover and beyond!
www.graceandover.org

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- **Sunday Night S'Mores** - every Sunday during August - 7 p.m.
- Farmers Market - Every Tuesday afternoon - 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- Feed My Starving Children - August 12 at 6:00 pm
- **Around the Town Women's Adventure** - August 13 at 5 p.m.
- Angel Pins and Backpack Blessings - August 29 & 30 at all worship services.
- Rally Weekend - September 12 & 13 - Worship Schedule returns to Sat. 5:00p, Sun. 8, 9, & 10:30 a.m.